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clergy of New England as a class, and of the motives which actuated them. If New England can lay any claims on the score of intelligence, morality, and love of freedom, she owes her position to these very ministers. They had faults, many faults; yet no one can read their history without feeling that they were influenced, even in their errors, by far higher considerations than are imputed to them in this History. Mr. Elliott evidently does not comprehend the men nor the age; does not see the mingling of great and glorious ideas, just beginning to be developed, with the fragments of old falsities, whose roots penetrated far back into the ages past, and which, therefore, could not soon, nor easily, be eradicated. The great wonder as to the character of the Puritans will always be, not that they erred so much, but that they comprehended so much truth. We must object, also, to many of Mr. Elliott's extracts, as adapted to give a wrong impression of the men and of the times. Foolish prayers and narrow views may be found in every age, and yet not mark the age. We would hardly be willing to have an historian, a hundred years hence, judge us by extracts parallel to those here given.

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12. — *Married or Single?* By the Author of "Hope Leslie," "Redwood," "Home," etc., etc. In two volumes. New York: Harper and Brothers. 1857. 12mo. pp. 261, 284.

MISS SEDGWICK has the rare gift of conveying moral instruction without *moralizing*. Of didacticism in style there is hardly less in the most trashy novel of the day than in this, her last tale; and yet a story fraught with ethical lessons so various and so searching has seldom come under our cognizance. These lessons, however, are derived, not from abnormal personages, created to point a moral, but from the natural development and action of very much such characters as we are all familiar with. And it is especially in character-painting that Miss Sedgwick may be pronounced second to no living author of fiction. Her *dramatis personæ* in the volumes before us comprise a wonderful diversity of types, none of them abstractions with names, but all of them lifelike, — saints, with just those little blemishes that make them not altogether angels; profligates, with just enough of the Divine image left to raise them above fiends; persons odd and grotesque as any of Dickens's caricatures, yet with enough of common humanity to keep them in gearing with the social machinery of which they form a part. In the *dénouement* of the plot, she is only less successful. Two

of the female characters die, apparently because it was difficult to dispose of them otherwise, and some few of the incidents rather transcend probability ; but on the whole the story is managed with extraordinary skill, comprehending as it does several minor plots, with the rehearsal of several eventful chapters of family history prior in point of time to the opening of the first scene. The author's prime aim is to exhibit, as parallel with the holy and benign ministries of the true wife and mother, the no less sacred and lofty sphere of service open to self-respecting and voluntary maidenhood. But to enumerate all the moral axioms and postulates which the story illustrates and defends with explicitness and power, would be to give titles for a tolerably complete treatise of moral philosophy. While we find it hard to use, with regard to the author, degrees of comparison short of the superlative, this seems to us, both in an artistical and an ethical point of view, the best of the series that bears her name.

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13. — *Life of James Montgomery.* By MRS. HELEN C. KNIGHT.  
Boston : Gould and Lincoln. 1857. 12mo. pp. 416.

WHILE James Montgomery's longer poems had a fame that can hardly be said to have survived their author, his sweet hymns, in the half-plaintive, half-jubilant tone of Moravian piety, will give voice to the devotion of Christians of every name, wherever the English language is spoken, till its present idioms grow obsolete. His life, too, is full of interest, as we trace the errant fortunes of his boyhood, the strangely checkered experiences of his editorial career, the slow development of his spiritual character, the genial philanthropy that grew with his years, the unsought honors that clustered around his latter days, and the traits, so like those of the beloved John, that irradiated the protracted old age of his earthly life and the perennial youth of his heart. His letters and subjective poems of themselves form an almost complete autobiography. These Mrs. Knight has compiled with her wonted skill and taste, and bound them together with her own graceful narrative, which supplements, but never supersedes or duplicates, his life-record. Mrs. Knight has thus made a most valuable addition to our biographical literature, and has brought to our familiar knowledge a character which embodies as much of the "beauty of holiness" as it is ever given to any one mortal to attain and exhibit.